



ACKERMANN'S
OXFORD

—
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ACKERMANN'S

OXFORD

The book from which the bulk of these plates are reproduced is not only a classic familiar to anyone who has any attachment to the city, but a sensitive record of English architecture unsurpassed in its appeal to the lover of traditional beauty in building. Mr Howard Colvin, Fellow of St John's College, who is equally outstanding as an historian of the Middle Ages and of English seventeenth- and eighteenth-century architecture, takes the reader through the University buildings and those of the Colleges. The illustrations are supplemented by certain others taken from Ingram's Memorials of Oxford.

THE KING PENGUIN BOOKS

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ACKERMANN'S OXFORD



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WITH NOTES BY
H. M. COLVIN

A SELECTION OF PLATES FROM
RUDOLPH ACKERMANN'S
*A History of the University of Oxford, its Colleges,
Halls, and Public Buildings*

1814

AND JAMES INGRAM'S
Memorials of Oxford

1837

PENGUIN BOOKS

LONDON

THE KING PENGUIN BOOKS

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ACKERMANN'S OXFORD

OXFORD has had many illustrators, from Agas and Bereblock in the sixteenth century to Bernard Gotch and Sir Muirhead Bone in the twentieth. But it is only at long intervals that an artist or a publisher more ambitious than the rest has had the courage to issue an entire volume of plates devoted to the buildings of the University. Such are David Loggan's *Oxonia Illustrata* of 1675, with its meticulously detailed portraits of the colleges; the collection of engravings published by W. Williams in 1732 as *Oxonia Depicta*; and Rudolph Ackermann's *History of the University of Oxford*, issued by subscription in 1814, with 64 elegant aquatint plates after drawings by Augustus Pugin, F. Mackenzie, and others. Ackermann's *History* was followed in 1837 by Ingram's *Memorials of Oxford*, for which Mackenzie supplied many fresh drawings exquisitely engraved on steel by John le Keux. With the second half of the nineteenth century the art of the pencil and of the burin gave way to that of the photographer, worthily represented in Oxford by H. W. Taunt (c. 1842–1922), whose magnificent collection of sepia prints is now in the City Library. But the tradition of topographical illustration has been maintained without a break by the pictorial headings to the University Almanack, and the pen-and-ink drawings by Edmund Hort New, which were published in 1932 as *A New Loggan View of the Oxford Colleges*, represent a charming and on the whole successful attempt to delineate Oxford afresh in the old manner.

Ackermann's plates, though less accurate in their representation of architectural detail than those of either Loggan

or Ingram, are valuable not only for their artistic merits, but as a record of Oxford in its Georgian prime. They show the colleges after the great period of building in the eighteenth century was over, but before the Gothic Revival had begun to take its toll of post-Reformation architecture. They show its gardens laid out in accordance with the principles of the picturesque for the first time since winding walks and carefully composed clumps of trees had taken the place of the pleached alleys and geometrical parterres faithfully depicted by Loggan and Williams. They show its streets before they had been invaded by the horse trams whose clatter made the principal thoroughfares of Victorian Oxford almost as noisy as they are to-day; and they show them peopled not only with members of the University, but with country people driving flocks of sheep across an unwidened Magdalen Bridge to the cattle market on Gloucester Green. For the Oxford which they record was a rural as well as an academic centre, innocent as yet of industry, gasworks, and by-passes. It was insanitary and unlighted, periodically subject to serious flooding, and ruled by a corrupt and antiquated corporation. Politically it was little better than a pocket borough controlled by the Duke of Marlborough, and academically it was only just beginning to rouse itself from the complacent torpor of the eighteenth century. But as a spectacle for the visitor it had probably never been surpassed when in 1814 Ackermann's artists set down its external appearance for the benefit of posterity.

The eight black-and-white figures which appear between pages 16 and 17 are taken from James Ingram's *Memorials of Oxford* (1837), and the sixteen colour plates from Rudolph Ackermann's *History of the University of Oxford, its Colleges, Halls, and Public Buildings* (1814). The descriptions of colleges are arranged alphabetically.

THE DIVINITY SCHOOL (PLATE 1)

To enter the Divinity School is—more perhaps than anywhere else in Oxford—to enter the atmosphere of the scholastic past. For it was here, beneath a vault unsurpassed for Gothic intricacy by any other in England, that for nearly four hundred years candidates for the degrees of Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity performed their statutory ‘exercises’. These ‘exercises’ consisted of formal disputations in the presence of a ‘regent master’ or ‘moderator’, in the course of which the candidate had to ‘respond’ satisfactorily to questions put to him by his opponent; hence the modern ‘Responsions’, which are, however, merely a qualifying examination for admission to the University.

Ackermann’s plate shows the interior of the Divinity School fitted up for the performance of these ‘exercises’. It is divided by a wooden railing into two parts, in the upper of which is an elevated pulpit for the moderator and two others for the disputants. The lower part of the School is left free for the audience, represented on this occasion by the five gowned figures on the right.

In the Middle Ages these disputations were (as they were intended to be) a formidable intellectual ordeal in which there were many failures. But by the end of the eighteenth century they had gradually degenerated into a lifeless formality in which prearranged questions were followed by prearranged answers, ‘handed down, from generation to generation, on long slips of paper’, and consisting (in the words of one who had taken part in them) ‘of foolish syllogisms on foolish subjects, of the formation or the signification of which the respondent and opponent seldom knew more than an infant in swaddling clothes’. In 1802 the Honours Examination

was instituted in an attempt to restore the credit of the University as an examining body, and for a time the old system enjoyed a temporary revival until it was eventually superseded by that of written examinations.

THE RADCLIFFE LIBRARY (PLATE 2)

The Radcliffe Library is one of a trinity of Oxford institutions which owe their existence to the munificence of Dr John Radcliffe, the most famous English physician of the early eighteenth century. The others are the Radcliffe Infirmary and the Radcliffe Observatory which adjoins it. All these were until recently administered by the body of Trustees set up under Radcliffe's will, but in 1927 the freehold of the Library was transferred to the University for whose benefit it had been erected.

Dr Radcliffe's intention to build a library in Oxford was known two years at least before his death in 1714, but it was not until 1720 that the Trustees resolved to approach a number of well-known architects for 'Draughts or designs', and delays in acquiring a suitable site postponed their final decision until 1734. In that year Nicholas Hawksmoor and James Gibbs were invited to submit drawings. Hawksmoor had been thinking about the proposed Radcliffe Library ever since 1712 or 1713, and many of his sketches survive. They are all remarkable for architectural magnificence rather than for the amount of accommodation for books which they provide, and it looks as if Hawksmoor, with his passion for the monumental, was thinking of the building more as a memorial to Dr Radcliffe than as an annexe to the Bodleian; and so what his plans show is a centrally-planned domed building enshrining a statue of the founder – a library which was also to

be a mausoleum. His rival's plans, on the other hand, were for a rectangular building better adapted to the storage of books, but architecturally of no great distinction. In the end, it was Gibbs who obtained the commission, but it was the circular domed building shown in Ackermann's plate which he erected between 1737 and 1748, and it can hardly be doubted that the Library as it stands represents Hawksmoor's original idea as interpreted by Gibbs.

THE RADCLIFFE OBSERVATORY (PLATE 3)

In 1771 the Radcliffe Trustees took the decision to purchase a piece of ground 'and to erect thereon a large Observatory Room for the use of the Savilian Professor of Astronomy to read courses of lectures'. Building began in the following year with Henry Keene as architect, but his design was severely criticized, and 'so keen were the animadversions upon the work, that he was dismissed; and Mr Wyatt, who had gained a reputation by his Pantheon in London, was called in to supply his place, and to finish the design'. The name of 'James Wyatt Esq^r R.A. Architect' is accordingly inscribed on the globe which was set up on the roof of the completed Observatory in 1794, together with those of 'James Pears, Mayor of Oxford, Builder', and 'John Bacon Esq^r R.A. Sculpt^r'.

The building consists of two parts – the Professor's house on the ground floor, with the octagonal observatory rising above it in the centre. The observatory was based on the 'Tower of the Winds' at Athens (published by James Stuart in 1762), whose architectural features were ingeniously and on the whole successfully adapted by Wyatt to the purposes of eighteenth-century science. They have not, however, proved equal to the demands of modern astronomy, and in 1930 the

Trustees decided to transfer the Observatory to the Southern hemisphere. Wyatt's building has since been taken over by the adjoining Infirmary, and in place of the elegant instruments depicted in Ackermann's plate the modern visitor is confronted by an exhibition of diseased organs preserved in spirit.

THE CLARENDON BUILDING (PLATE 4)

The history of the Oxford University Press – that is, of a press financed and controlled by the University – begins in 1585, when Joseph Barnes started work under the direction of a committee *De Libris Imprimendis*. At first the Press was on a small scale, and required no special accommodation. But the valuable privilege of printing the Authorized Version of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, granted to the University in 1636, brought a great increase of business, and when Archbishop Sheldon gave money to erect a building for the ceremonial acts of the University, he stipulated that provision should also be made for the better accommodation of its Press. The compositors and presses were accordingly installed in the Sheldonian Theatre in 1669, the former under the galleries, the latter in the basement. But much inconvenience was caused by this arrangement, and before long the presses were moved into other quarters which, however, proved almost equally unsatisfactory. Financial difficulties made it impossible to house the Press in a more satisfactory manner until the early eighteenth century, when the publication of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* provided the Press with a best-seller. It was the profits derived from the sale of this famous book which made possible the erection of the Clarendon Building in 1712–13.

According to a contemporary guide-book, 'the Plan or

Model of this Structure was contrived by that ingenious Artist of a Mason, Mr Townsend of Oxford'. This was William Townesend, a master-builder who (in Hearne's words) had 'a hand in all the Buildings in Oxford' and often combined the functions of architect and builder. But surviving accounts, the original drawings (preserved in Worcester College Library), and other evidence combine to show that the Clarendon Building was in fact designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, and that Townesend was merely the executant. The influence of Vanbrugh (with whom Hawksmoor had been working at Blenheim and elsewhere) is plain in this strong, masculine building, with its great Doric columns and emphatic cornice, silently deprecating the weak compromises and embarrassed half-statements of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's New Bodleian opposite. The leaden statues on the roof, formerly nine in number, represent the Muses, and were designed by Sir James Thornhill, whose drawings for them are in the Clarke Collection at Worcester College. Two of them were unfortunately blown down early in the nineteenth century and have never been replaced. Their fall occasioned the following verses, typical of the rhymed witticisms which were a characteristic product of the time:

*Look out, Oxonians, one and all
For here the Muses are of lead;
And when such heavy ladies fall,
'Tis time for each to mind his head.*

In 1830 the University Press moved to the new premises in Walton Street which it still occupies, but the imprint 'At the Clarendon Press' continues to be used for learned works printed at Oxford and published at the instance of the Delegates (the body who manage the Press on behalf of the University), as opposed to those of a less academic character

which bear the name of the 'Oxford University Press'. The Clarendon Building itself now houses the offices of the University Registry and Chest, but the Delegates of the Press retain the finely panelled room in which their meetings are still held.

ALL SOULS COLLEGE (PLATE 5)

The College of the Souls of all the Faithful Departed, commonly called All Souls College, was founded by Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1438. Chichele had been a Fellow of New College, and William of Wykeham's influence is evident both in the statutes and in the buildings of the new foundation. Like New College, it was to be as much an ecclesiastical as an academic institution, for careful provision was made for the celebration of mass, and the fellows were bound to pray daily for the soul of their founder and for the souls of those for whose benefit he had founded the college. It is therefore no accident that the medieval Front Quadrangle should be dominated by the chapel, nor that the chapel itself should be closely modelled on that of New College. Beyond it, just as at New College, there was a cemetery enclosed by a cloister. Of this, however, nothing remains, for it was swept away early in the eighteenth century in order to make way for the great quadrangle seen in Ackermann's plate. The architect of the new buildings was Nicholas Hawksmoor, whose bust can be seen in the charmingly domed buttery where the Fellows are served with luncheon. Like Hawksmoor's other interiors, this is classical in style, but in the quadrangle outside he was allowed to demonstrate the romantic possibilities of Gothic in a way which still startles the beholder. For here the Gothic of the Middle Ages is deliberately dramatized by an architect who was temperamentally inclined towards the

creation of sombre and awe-inspiring effects. He was more accustomed, however, to achieving them through the use of the Roman Orders, and if, after the first feeling of surprise has subsided, the spectator grows critical of what Hawksmoor called his 'Monastick manner', it is precisely because the Gothic devices serve so ineffectually to conceal the classical formality of the whole composition.

BALLIOL COLLEGE (FIGURE 1)

Balliol is one of the three oldest foundations in the University and owes its existence to a penance imposed by a thirteenth-century bishop of Durham on John de Balliol, a great North Country baron with whom he had quarrelled. As an act of enforced charity Balliol was to make himself responsible for the support of sixteen poor scholars at Oxford. At first they were housed in a hired hall on the site of the present college, and it was not until after Balliol's death in 1269 that his widow, the lady Devorguilla of Galloway, gave his college a permanent endowment, and, in 1282, its first statutes. But Balliol, 'though an early, long remained an obscure' foundation, and it was only in the mid nineteenth century that it attained the intellectual pre-eminence which made it the most celebrated college in Victorian Oxford. When Ackermann published his *History*, Dr Jenkyns (Master, 1819–54) had yet to throw open the Balliol scholarships, and the memory of John Wycliffe's brief tenure of the Mastership had not yet been eclipsed by that of Benjamin Jowett.

But architecturally, if not academically, the Balliol of 1814 had more to attract the visitor than the Balliol of to-day. For the Victorian greatness of the college found characteristic expression in the rebuilding of all but the ancient hall and

library, and although Butterfield's chapel may be allowed to share with Keble the somewhat uncomfortable genius of its architect, it is difficult to find much to admire in Waterhouse's baronial front to Broad Street or in Salvin's tower at the junction of the old hall and library. What they replaced was of no especial interest, but it had the merit of being venerable, authentic, and modest; what they superseded can be seen in the library, where Pugin's rival plans are preserved in a volume bound and illuminated in the style of a medieval Book of Hours. In it the Balliol of Pugin's imagination is depicted with all the enthusiasm with which an architect can endow his most cherished designs. There were to be 'rooms suitable for the earnest labour of Christian undergraduates'; there was to be a great kitchen with an octagonal roof like the abbot's kitchen at Glastonbury; a restored hall with a high-pitched hammer-beam roof, and, of course, a chapel resplendent with stained glass, coloured tiles, and carved woodwork. The roof was to be 'worked entirely of English oak and ceiled with oak boards painted azure with stars and suns of gold', the 'croquets, bosses, roses, strings, corbels, canopies &c.' were to be 'busy in detail and of diverse design'. The whole programme of the Gothic Revival is implicit in Pugin's eloquent drawings, and even the specification is set out in what its author imagined to be medieval terms.

Pugin's designs were sponsored by W. G. Ward, a Fellow of Balliol who subsequently joined the Roman Catholic Church and was deprived of his degree by Convocation on grounds of heresy. In an age when morals and aesthetics were already beginning to be confused, and in a university in which religious controversy was approaching its peak, the employment of a Roman Catholic architect to rebuild a Protestant college was itself a kind of heresy, and the college meeting to which Pugin's designs were submitted became so

acrimonious that the record was afterwards cut out of the minute book. It was the Protestants who prevailed, and Pugin was never again to be given the opportunity of making his own contribution to the anthology of Oxford Gothic.

BRASENOSE COLLEGE (FIGURE 2)

Brasenose was founded in 1509 by William Smith, Bishop of Lincoln, and Sir Richard Sutton, and took the place of the medieval Brasenose Hall. On its gates there is still fixed a bronze mask or 'brazen nose' of the sort which gave the hall (and afterwards the college) its name. It is known to have been there since the sixteenth century, but what is believed to be the original 'brazen nose' is preserved in the hall. In 1334 it was taken to Stamford by a body of masters who, having been worsted in an encounter with their rebellious scholars, went elsewhere to teach in peace. This attempt to establish a rival university was eventually frustrated by royal authority, but the 'brazen nose' itself was not recovered until 1890, when the college bought it in a sale at Stamford.

The original buildings are represented by the main quadrangle, whose principal architectural feature is the entrance-tower, completed in 1518. To the south is the chapel, built between 1656 and 1666 to the designs of John Jackson, a London master-mason who came to Oxford in 1634 to work at St John's. In style it combines Gothic features with classical design in a way which has no exact parallel in Oxford. This may in part have been due to the fact that the materials of the medieval chapel of St Mary's College (on the site of Frewin Hall) were incorporated in the new structure. But the combination of styles is too sophisticated to be merely fortuitous, and suggests that Jackson was deliberately aiming at an effect

which he would probably have described as 'curiously contrived', but which to-day can only be classified as 'Mannerist'.

In Ackermann's time the area to the south-west of the chapel was covered by houses and shops, but the architectural possibilities of extending the college to the High Street had already occurred to Hawksmoor in the early eighteenth century, and were seriously considered by the college in 1807-10. Nothing, however, was done until 1881, when the first stone was laid of a new quadrangle designed by Sir T. G. Jackson.

CHRIST CHURCH (PLATE 6)

Christ Church, known to its members as 'The House', is the largest and most imposing of the Oxford colleges. Everything about it is on a grand scale, from the college chapel, which is a cathedral church, to the famous bell which hangs in Tom Tower and tolls longer and louder than any other in the University. Its cloister court forms the largest quadrangle in Oxford, and its great hall is still, as in 1814, 'unrivalled as a refectory by any room in the kingdom'. Indeed, if there is one feature of Oxford life which has not changed since Ackermann's day, it is dinner in hall. Men may no longer attend chapel – they may even go about the town without cap or gown – but they still dine in hall, and (as J. G. Lockhart wrote in 1823, * with Christ Church hall in his mind) 'enough of the ancient form and circumstance is still preserved, to impress, in no small manner, the imagination of him who, for the first time, is partaker in the feast. . . . The solemn bell, sounding as if some great ecclesiastical dignitary were about to be consigned to mother earth – the echoing vestibule – the wide and lofty staircase, lined with serving-men so old and demure that

* In his novel *Reginald Dalton*.



FIGURE 1. *Balliol College*



FIGURE 2. *Brasenose College*



FIGURE 3. *Corpus Christi College*



FIGURE 4. Hertford College (*Magdalen Hall*)



FIGURE 5. *Merton College*



FIGURE 6. *Pembroke College*



FIGURE 7. *The Queen's College*



FIGURE 8. *Worcester College*

they might almost have been mistaken for so many pieces of grotesque statuary – the hall itself, with its high lancet windows of stained glass, and the brown obscurity of its oaken roof – the yawning chimneys with their blazing logs – the long narrow tables – the elevated dais – the array of gowned guests – the haughty line of seniors seated in stall-like chairs, and separated by an ascent of steps from the younger inmates of the mansion – the Latin grace, chanted at one end of the hall, and slowly rechanting from the other – the bearded and mitred visages frowning from every wall – all these still combine to make ‘so antique, so venerable, and withal so novel a scene’ as to impress the newcomer with ‘a certain sense of awe’.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE (FIGURE 3)

Corpus, more than any other Oxford college established before the Reformation, has preserved the scale and character of its original buildings. It was founded in 1517 by Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, but building had already begun some years earlier, and the quadrangle was probably complete by about 1525. Unlike those of so many colleges, its appearance has been little injured by later alterations, though the battlemented parapet shown in Mackenzie’s engraving was a seventeenth-century addition (since replaced by a plain parapet). The sundial in the centre was erected in 1581.

On the right is the hall, handsomely panelled in 1701–2 by Arthur Frogley, the Oxford joiner, and covered by a magnificent hammer-beam roof which, preserved practically intact, ‘constitutes by far the grandest architectural monument in the college’. Its Gothic windows were despoiled of their tracery in the eighteenth century, but have since been restored. The chapel, a plain parallelogram, contains some excellent

woodwork of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including a handsome screen with carvings by Jonathan Maine, a craftsman who executed some of the finest woodwork in St Paul's Cathedral. A passage-way beside the chapel leads to the Cloister Quadrangle. A cloister of some kind formed part of Bishop Fox's original buildings, but early in the eighteenth century it was rebuilt at the same time as the adjoining Fellows' Building. Dallaway, in his edition (1827) of Horace Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, states that this was designed by Dean Aldrich of Christ Church, the architect of All Saints Church and of the Peckwater Quadrangle at his own college, but it may equally well have been planned by William Townesend, the contracting mason. Through it a passage-way leads to the small but delightful garden.

EXETER COLLEGE (PLATE 7)

To-day, with its smooth fronts of bewindowed ashlar, and its quadrangle dominated by Gilbert Scott's towering chapel, Exeter is architecturally a monument to the Gothic Revival. In 1814 its buildings still bore witness to the gradual process of endowment to which the college owed its existence. Founded in 1314 by Walter de Stapledon, Bishop of Exeter, it was at first known as Stapledon Hall. Stapledon's premature death in 1325 prevented him from completing its endowment, but his intentions were amply fulfilled by subsequent benefactors. Early in the fifteenth century Edmund Stafford, Bishop of Exeter, added both to its buildings and to its revenues, and in the sixteenth Sir William Petre remodelled the statutes and added eight fellowships to the foundation.

Of the medieval buildings Palmer's Tower, so called after William Palmer, Rector from 1432 to 1435, is now the only

survivor. The Turl Street front in its present form is the design of H. J. Underwood, who in 1834–5 substituted a conventional collegiate tower for the classical frontispiece with which Narcissus Marsh, Archbishop of Dublin, had embellished the entrance in 1701–3. The buildings on Broad Street are partially the work of Underwood and partially that of Scott. The Gothic Survival chapel built by Rector Hakewill in 1624 was wantonly destroyed in 1855, and its fittings dispersed. It is difficult to write dispassionately about the building which replaced it: in a different setting it might be possible to appreciate its aggressively Gothic silhouette, obviously based on the French examples which Scott so much admired, even to enjoy the elaborate ecclesiology of its interior. But as it is one can only resent it as an intrusion into the collegiate precinct which it so rudely overpowers.

Fortunately the hall survives in much the same state as when Mackenzie drew its interior. It was built in 1618 at the expense of Sir John Acland, and is lighted by handsome Perpendicular windows in the authentic Gothic tradition.

HERTFORD COLLEGE (FIGURE 4)

Strictly speaking, Hertford has no place in *Ackermann's Oxford*, for it was not until 1874 that the Act of Parliament was passed to which the present college owes its existence. The site which it occupies had, however, been the seat of an academic Hall since the thirteenth century, and in 1740 its then Principal obtained a charter of incorporation converting Hart Hall into Hertford College. But its endowments were scarcely equal to maintain its new dignity, and there were doubts as to the validity of its statutes. In 1816 the college, already moribund, was formally dissolved and its buildings

were transferred to Magdalen Hall, a former dependency of Magdalen College whose site was coveted by that body. Under this arrangement Magdalen College undertook to put the buildings 'in a state of complete repair', and in fact rebuilt the whole of the Catte Street front in the form shown in Ingram's engraving. The architect was E. W. Garbett of Winchester, and the new buildings were completed in 1822. In 1874, with the aid of a benefaction of £30,000, Magdalen Hall was reconstituted as Hertford College, and in 1887 Sir T. G. Jackson was employed to fill the gap between Garbett's wings by designing the present hall and entrance-gateway.

JESUS COLLEGE (PLATE 8)

Jesus College was founded in 1571 at the instance of Dr Hugh Price, who petitioned the Queen that she 'would be pleased to found a College in Oxford on which he might bestow his estates for the maintenance of certain scholars of Wales, to be trained up in good letters'. Jesus remains a predominantly Welsh society, and in Ackermann's time it was customary on St David's Day for members of the college to parade up and down the High Street wearing a leek attached to the tassel of their caps.

The buildings were chiefly erected in the early seventeenth century, and consist of two quadrangles separated by the hall. The chapel was built out of the contributions of the Welsh gentry and was consecrated in 1621. It consisted originally of a simple parallelogram with Gothic windows on either side, but soon proved to be too small, and was accordingly lengthened to the east in 1636. The original east wall survived as the division between nave and chancel, the narrow arch shown in the plate being formed by the simple expedient of

removing the tracery of the old east window and carrying its jambs down to the ground. This interesting and effective feature was stupidly destroyed by G. E. Street in 1864, when he substituted the present wide arch. Most of the original fittings were destroyed at the same time, though the screen bearing the arms of Sir Leoline Jenkins was spared. The painting over the altar was a copy of Guido's 'Contest between St Michael and Satan', presented by Viscount Bulkeley in the eighteenth century. It was removed in 1855, when the fine seventeenth-century Gothic window which it had obscured was reglazed. This formed part of the alterations carried out by J. C. Buckler, under whose direction the Turl Street front of the college was rebuilt with the conventional gatehouse and turret.

LINCOLN COLLEGE (PLATE 9)

Lincoln was founded in 1427 by Bishop Richard Fleming, and takes its name from his see of Lincoln. He died in 1431, before the buildings were complete, and the college fell into a state of decay from which it was rescued by Thomas Rotherham, Bishop of Lincoln and afterwards Archbishop of York, by whom it was reconstituted and endowed in 1478. The college consisted only of the small Front Quadrangle until the early seventeenth century, when the Chapel Quadrangle was built to the south. The chapel itself was erected in 1629–31, largely at the expense of John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln. Williams, though not a disciple of Laud, shared his desire to bring back a traditional decorum into the worship of the Anglican Church, and Lincoln Chapel is a monument of Caroline piety at its best. The Gothic windows are glazed with particularly beautiful glass attributed to the Dutchman van Ling, and the floor is paved with squares of black and

white marble. The furniture is all of cedar, which (as a visitor wrote in 1636) 'gives such an Odoriferous Smell, that Holy Water in the Romish Churches doth not exceede it, lett them use what art they can to perfume it'. Happily it remains almost unaltered, a perfect example of the well-furnished interior which the seventeenth-century High-Churchman thought appropriate to the House of God, but which his Victorian equivalent rejected in favour of the cold propriety of bare stone walls, encaustic tiles, and naked rafters.

MAGDALEN COLLEGE (PLATE 10)

In 1823 there was to be bought in Oxford a substantial pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Original Architecture of St Mary Magdalen College*, and containing some sharp animadversions 'on the innovations anciently or recently attempted'. Its author was John Chessell Buckler, a young man who at the age of thirty already had a remarkable knowledge of English medieval architecture. His father, John Buckler, was employed by Magdalen as bailiff of its Southwark estate, but his real interest was in drawing ancient buildings, an occupation in which he was enthusiastically assisted by his son. The pamphlet was therefore written by one who knew Magdalen well, and who had good reason to fear the effects of the vandalism which he denounced. For this great and well-endowed college had never held its ancient buildings in great esteem since the time (in the 1720's) when it was proposed to sweep away the medieval cloisters and to substitute for them a great classical quadrangle. The New Buildings designed by William Townesend with James Gibbs and Francis Smith of Warwick as consulting architects are the only portion of this scheme which came to fruition, but it was

not until 1824 that the idea of completing it was finally abandoned, and a portfolio in the college library is full of architects' proposals for carrying on where Townesend left off. Exactly a century earlier the old buildings had been described by the architect Hawksmoor as 'soe decriped that Repairing any part (except the Hall and Chapell) signifys but little'. Now, a century later, they were urgently in need of attention. Unfortunately, despite the 'exalted talents and refined taste' of the President, Dr Routh, their restoration was carried out in a manner which alarmed the antiquaries, divided the college, and did little to enhance the reputation of the architect, Joseph Parkinson of London. The greater part of the Cloister Quadrangle was rebuilt, and the whole of the east elevation, facing the New Buildings, was reconstructed in Parkinson's coarse and unscholarly Gothic. The gargoyle at the north-west corner of this new front is said to represent the features of Dr Ellerton, a Fellow who had his rooms in this part of the college. The sculptor was bribed by the undergraduates to copy the 'picturesque ugly' face of their tutor, but he detected the resemblance, and 'insisted angrily on alteration'. This was done, but 'gradually the unkind invisible chisel of old age worked upon his octogenarian countenance; his own cheek was hollowed, his own jaw contracted, till the quaint projecting mask became a likeness even more graphic than before'.*

In 1828 it was decided to attack the chapel, and a prize of one hundred guineas was offered 'for the best plan for fitting up the interior'. The winner was L. N. Cottingham, who proceeded to 'restore' the interior with singular disregard for its ancient features and historical associations. In 1830 the college resolved, at the architect's suggestion, that 'in refitting the interior of the chapel no old woodwork shall be retained,

* W. Tuckwell, *Reminiscences of Oxford*, 1900, p. 22.

except only the original carved seats', on the ground that 'the same wood throughout was necessary to the due uniformity of effect'. The whole of the fittings, 'consisting of the valuable oak carved stalls, seats, canopies, desks &c.; beautifully carved oak figures of various kinds; the splendid oak carved capitals, columns, cornices, frames, &c. to the altar-piece; the ancient carved frontispiece, panel work, screen, tracery, capitals, columns, &c. to the organ', were accordingly sold by auction, and Ackermann's plate is almost the only record of what must have been one of the most handsomely furnished chapels in Oxford.

MERTON COLLEGE (FIGURE 5)

Merton owes its existence to the desire of Walton de Merton, Bishop of Rochester, to provide members of the secular clergy with a university education. His scholars were already established as a corporate body as early as 1264, and in 1274 they took up residence on the present site adjoining what was then the parish church of St John Baptist. Merton therefore has a longer continuous history than any other college in Oxford, and in spite of some injudicious alterations in the nineteenth century, it retains more of its original buildings than any other foundation of comparable antiquity. The choir of the chapel was built during the last quarter of the thirteenth century, and is a fine example of the first phase of 'Decorated' Gothic, though its interior has never recovered from the cold blast of ecclesiology which swept away its fittings and monumental tablets in 1851. The piers and arches of the crossing were built early in the reign of Edward III, but the transepts were not completed for many years and the magnificent central tower was not finished until after 1451. The intended

nave was never even begun, but the weather-moulds and blocked arches on the west side of the transepts show the builders' intention. The result was a T-shaped chapel which has sometimes been regarded as the prototype of those of New College, All Souls, and Magdalen. But in these the so-called 'ante-chapel' really represents the two eastern bays of an incomplete aisled nave, which is something quite different from the cruciform plan of Merton chapel. There is in fact evidence – both documentary and architectural – to show that the builders of New College chapel planned a full nave, and that their intention was frustrated by difficulties in acquiring the land now occupied by the cloisters. By the time the land became available it was found that the truncated nave was, after all, quite sufficient for the needs of a collegiate body with no parochial responsibilities, and the T-shaped plan became established as the standard Oxford arrangement.

NEW COLLEGE (PLATE 11)

Before the revision of their Statutes as a result of the University Commissions of 1850 and 1877, nearly all the Oxford colleges were comparatively small and exceedingly close corporations which drew their Fellows and scholars partly from Founder's kin and partly from particular schools to which they were tied. New College, in particular, was in many ways an academic world of its own, shut away behind its black walls of Wheatley stone. No college was more closely tied to its satellite school than New College was to Winchester, and there was far more community between the two 'St. Mary Winton Colleges' than there was between New College and its Oxford neighbours. The Fellows even claimed the right to conduct their own examinations for degrees conferred by the

University, and continued to do so until the institution of class-lists placed New College men at such a disadvantage that in 1834 the college finally renounced its privilege of taking degrees without submitting to public examination.

Even in its architectural history New College is closely linked with Winchester, for William Wynford, the mason-architect who supervised the erection of the original buildings, was also employed by William of Wykeham at Winchester, where he planned the college and rebuilt the nave of the cathedral. And in 1682, when it was decided to add the Garden Quadrangle, the master-mason employed was William Byrd, who in the following year became one of the principal contractors for the new palace at Winchester which Wren had designed for Charles II. What makes this connexion of particular interest is the fact that the plan of the Garden 'Quadrangle', with its stepped-back wings—ultimately derived from Versailles—was also that of the royal palace. Byrd's first design for the new buildings had been for a closed quadrangle of the traditional type, and it seems likely that it was a preview of Wren's design for Winchester Palace which led him to change his mind. It was not, however, until the early years of the eighteenth century that the resemblance was rendered complete by the addition of the two terminal blocks, the work respectively of Richard Piddington and William Townesend.

No further additions were made to the college buildings until the end of the eighteenth century, when James Wyatt formed a delightful apsidal library on one of the upper floors of the main quadrangle and carried out alterations of a more questionable character in the hall and chapel. In the case of the chapel these consisted of substituting an imitation plaster vault for the original low-pitched roof, restoring (again in plaster) the elaborate Gothic reredos which originally covered the east wall, and erecting over the entrance-screen an organ-

loft 'in a style to correspond with the altar'. No one knew better than Wyatt how to exploit the dramatic possibilities of Gothic architecture, and here he made the most of the long vista down the chapel by ingeniously dividing the organ in order to reveal a glimpse of the celebrated Reynolds window beyond. In Ackermann's time the effect was greatly admired, but unfortunately it was swept away in 1879 when Gilbert Scott was invited to undo Wyatt's 'errors' by substituting his own.

Oriel College (PLATE 12)

In 1324 Adam de Brome, almoner of Edward II and rector of St Mary's Oxford, acquired a hall known as Tackley's Inn on the south side of the High Street, and therein established a 'College of scholars in theology and the Dialectical Art'. Soon afterwards, however, the college was re-established with the king as its titular founder, and moved into another house known as the King's Hall, or La Oriole, a name which has since superseded its official title, 'the House of the Scholars of St Mary in Oxford'.

The medieval buildings were entirely destroyed when the whole college was rebuilt between 1620 and 1642. Those which replaced them form a homogeneous quadrangle in the Jacobean Gothic characteristic of seventeenth-century Oxford. The east side, depicted in Ackermann's plate, has been ingeniously planned so as to present a symmetrical façade to the visitor. It contains the hall, buttery, and ante-chapel, the latter concealed behind an oriel window designed to balance the hall oriel at the other end of the façade. Over the hall porch is a triangular composition of statues in niches, which although purely Gothic in origin, is here employed to perform the essentially classical function of a centre-piece. A

passage through the north range leads to the North Quadrangle, flanked by two eighteenth-century blocks designed in the same Jacobean style as the main quadrangle, and dominated by the elegant Ionic library designed by James Wyatt in 1788.

PEMBROKE COLLEGE (FIGURE 6)

Pembroke College was founded in 1624. It takes its name from William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, in whose chancellorship the former Broadgates Hall was reconstituted as a 'perpetual college of divinity, civil and canon law, arts, medicine, and other sciences'. The main quadrangle was built in the course of the seventeenth century in a modest Jacobean style. Until 1728 the college used the south aisle of the adjoining St Aldate's Church as a chapel and library. In 1709 the library was transferred to a room in the college, and in 1728 the society built its own chapel outside the west side of the quadrangle. The picturesque Pembroke aisle of St Aldate's was unhappily demolished when the church was 'restored' in 1862. In 1829-30 the front of the college was refaced in Bath stone to the designs of Daniel Evans, a local architect and builder, and it is his Tudor revival architecture which is shown in Mackenzie's drawing.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE (FIGURE 7)

Although one of the oldest of the Oxford colleges, having been founded in 1341 by Robert of Eglesfield, chaplain to Queen Philippa, Queen's retains none of its medieval buildings, and is unique in the University as a homogeneous group

of buildings in the classical style of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its architectural history is, nevertheless, far from simple, and there has been much confusion in the past as to the identity of the architects employed. Ackermann's text states cautiously that 'Hawksmoor is the nominal architect of this college, but, from its superiority to his other works, the design has been referred, with the exception of some of his own peculiarities, to his great master, Sir Christopher Wren'.

The only part of the college with which the name of Wren can definitely be connected is, however, the block in the north-east corner which was erected at the expense of Sir Joseph Williamson in 1671-2. Williamson was a statesman and a member of the Royal Society who knew Wren well, and it was natural that he should employ the Surveyor-General to design the building which was to bear his name. With its niched and pedimented façade facing St Peter's in the East it was a particularly pleasing example of Wren's early manner, but subsequent alterations have deprived it of most of its character and all its charm.

The magnificent library which the college built twenty years later has often been attributed to Wren, and its plan clearly owes something to the even more splendid library which he had recently designed for Trinity College, Cambridge. There is nothing, however, to show that Wren was consulted, and it is possible that the design was due to Dean Aldrich, who was making a name for himself in Oxford as an amateur architect.

The main quadrangle containing the hall and chapel was built in stages between 1704 and 1738, but conforms to a single design for which Hawksmoor was originally responsible, although modifications were introduced by William Townesend, the 'ingenious Artist of a mason' who was in

actual charge of the work. The interior of the hall, with its bold frontispieces at either end, suggests the Vanbrughian influence to which Hawksmoor was by now susceptible, whereas that of the chapel (begun in 1714) shows a Protestant reticence which comes as something of an anti-climax after the grandeur of the Doric frontispiece which frames its entrance. It may indeed be doubted whether Hawksmoor, who in 1711 had begun to design the strikingly original London churches upon which his fame as an architect chiefly depends, can have been personally responsible for this very conventional interior, which even a ceiling painted by Thornhill scarcely redeems from dullness.

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE (PLATE 13)

St John's, although a Tudor foundation, occupies the buildings of the medieval College of St Bernard which served as a place of study for Cistercian monks until the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. The front quadrangle, containing the hall and chapel, was built in the fifteenth century, but its original appearance has been considerably altered at later dates. Battlements were added in 1616, and nearly all the windows were deprived of their mullions in the eighteenth century. The chapel, consecrated in 1530 and refitted in the seventeenth century, was almost rebuilt by Edward Blore in 1843, and preserves only a few vestiges of its Caroline furnishings. Fortunately the hall was spared, and still retains its Georgian plaster ceiling, an elaborate marble chimney-piece of the same period, and a handsome stone screen designed by James Gibbs in 1742.

Architecturally, however, the chief glory of the college is the second, or Canterbury, Quadrangle illustrated by Acker-

mann. It was built by Archbishop Laud between 1631 and 1636, and represents the first serious attempt to classicize an Oxford quadrangle. The design was to some extent conditioned by the prior existence of the sixteenth-century library, which forms the greater part of the south side, and whose Tudor Gothic elevation was repeated on the north. For the east and west sides, however, Laud's architect designed a loggia of a type common enough in Italy, but 'not yet seene in Oxford'. In the centre of each he set an elaborate frontispiece designed to frame bronze statues of Charles I and Henrietta Maria cast by the court sculptor Hubert le Sueur. Neither the frontispieces nor the loggias make any concession to the traditional architecture in which they are set, and it is easy to criticize the ruthless way in which the great entablature cuts across the sills of the Gothic windows above. Nevertheless, the total effect is remarkably successful, and the Canterbury Quadrangle deservedly ranks as one of the finest achievements of a great period of Oxford building.

TRINITY COLLEGE (PLATE 14)

Although Trinity was not founded until 1555, it 'occupies the site and still preserves some of the buildings' of Durham College, a thirteenth-century offshoot of the cathedral priory of Durham. Part of the surviving buildings of the monastic college can be seen on the left in Ackermann's view. On the right is the hall built in 1618-20, with its Gothic oriel and two-light Perpendicular windows. Behind the artist, a passage-way gives access to the three-sided Garden Quadrangle, which was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and built in stages between 1668 and 1728. Wren also had a hand in determining the design of the chapel which occupies the

centre of Ackermann's plate, and constitutes Trinity's chief claim to architectural fame to-day. It was built in 1691-4 by President Bathurst, and took the place of the medieval chapel which had been desecrated during the Commonwealth. The original designs appear to have been due to Henry Aldrich, the learned Dean of Christ Church, who was regarded as 'an able judge in architecture' by his contemporaries, and who afterwards planned All Saints Church at the other end of the Turl. That Wren was consulted in 1692 is known from his letters and from some recently discovered accounts recording a payment to his servant. But by this time the work appears to have been too far advanced to admit of any major alteration to the design, and Wren's suggestions were confined to matters of detail. In any case a good deal was probably left to the discretion of Bartholomew Peisley, the master-mason, and the superbly furnished interior emphasizes the vital part played by the individual master-craftsman at a time when architectural control and supervision were much less rigid than they are to-day. The joiner responsible for the wainscoting was Arthur Frogley, a local man who was much employed in Oxford at this period. But some of the fine carving was done by Jonathan Maine, a craftsman employed by Wren at St Paul's, and there can be no doubt that the exquisite drops of fruit and foliage in limewood which frame the reredos were, as Celia Fiennes reported in 1694, the work of Grinling Gibbons himself. The curious glazed projection in the north-east corner conceals the alabaster effigies of the founder, Sir Thomas Pope, and of his second wife Elizabeth Blount, which by this ingenious expedient are prevented from interfering with the classical symmetry of the chapel, while at the same time retaining their place of honour on the north side of the altar.

At first sight University College presents to the visitor an appearance of architectural uniformity which on closer examination proves to be deceptive. For the Radcliffe Quadrangle, though indistinguishable in design from the older parts of the college (built between 1634 and 1675), is, in fact, an addition of the eighteenth century. It was built out of a bequest by Dr Radcliffe, who left £5000 to his old college 'for the building the front of University College down to Logic Lane answerable to the front already built'. The conservative character of its architecture is therefore to be explained by deference to Radcliffe's wishes, but it is remarkable that the master-masons employed (William Townesend and Bartholomew Peisley) should have been able to build so convincingly in the style of a previous age; for elsewhere in Oxford they were engaged in work of a strictly contemporary classical character. To appreciate this it is only necessary to examine the fan-vaulting under the entrance-tower, and to compare it with the classical hall and chapel which Townesend was building at Queen's at the same time, or with Hawksmoor's self-conscious Gothic upon which both he and Peisley were engaged at All Souls. In Oxford, as Mr Arthur Oswald has remarked, 'the survival of Gothic as a still living tradition overlaps its conscious revival as something romantic and picturesque'.

Until fifty years ago University College itself could show a particularly attractive example of this eighteenth-century romanticism in the interior of its hall, which was remodelled in 1766 to the designs of Henry Keene, an architect who specialized in the 'Gothick'. He concealed the Caroline hammer-beam roof with a plaster vault, wainscoted the walls in similar style, and introduced a marble chimney-piece with

an elaborate Gothic canopy framing a medallion of King Alfred, the legendary founder of the college. This last was the gift of Sir Roger Newdigate, who had recently employed Keene to Gothicize his house at Arbury in Warwickshire. Unhappily Keene's ceiling and woodwork were destroyed in 1904, and only the chimney-piece remains, concealed behind the Edwardian panelling. Fortunately Ackermann's plate gives an accurate representation of the interior of the hall in its Georgian fancy-dress.

WADHAM COLLEGE (PLATE 16)

It has often been pointed out that, in the Tory atmosphere of Oxford, Gothic architecture lingered on well into the seventeenth century, succumbing only in the early years of the eighteenth to the classical enthusiasm of Doctors Aldrich and Clarke. There is no better example of this Gothic survival than Wadham College, which was founded in the reign of James I and built in its entirety between 1610 and 1613. Its founder, Nicholas Wadham, was a Somerset landowner, and the masons employed came from his native county. The man in charge was a certain William Arnold, himself a master-mason, who a few years later was employed to remodel part of Dunster Castle for George Luttrell, and claimed to be of 'great experience and judgement in Architecture' – an opinion which was not, however, shared by his employer. At Wadham he followed the traditional Oxford plan, even to providing a T-shaped chapel on the model of New College and All Souls. It is this chapel in which the vitality of the Gothic tradition is most strikingly demonstrated, for were it not for the documentary evidence of its erection, it might easily be mistaken for a structure of the fifteenth century, so authentically

Gothic are the 'Perpendicular' windows of its choir and the pinnacled buttresses which divide them. In the windows of the ante-chapel, however, the tracery has been forced into a pattern which no medieval mason would have recognized, while the wooden screen and the glass are excellent examples of their period which serve to emphasize the architectural conservatism of their setting. Conscious antiquarianism is represented by the altar-piece at the east end, designed in 1831-2 by Edward Blore, an early Gothic Revivalist who had more honour in his own lifetime (Oxford gave him an honorary D.C.L. in 1834) than posterity has so far seen fit to allow him. At Wadham he was also responsible for the gates at the entrance to the college, and for various alterations to the Warden's lodgings.

WORCESTER COLLEGE (FIGURE 8)

Worcester was in 1814 the youngest of the Oxford colleges, having received its charter exactly a century before. It took over the buildings of the former Gloucester College, which had been established in 1283 as a house of study for Benedictine monks. The medieval buildings consisted of a hall and chapel which, with two ranges of *camerae* or lodgings, formed three sides of a roughly defined quadrangle. Each *camera* was maintained by a different Benedictine abbey for the accommodation of its own students, and bore the arms of its parent house – Glastonbury, Pershore, Malmesbury, and others whose identity is now uncertain. The southern range of *camerae* survives unaltered, and part of it can be seen on the left of Ingram's plate. On the right are the buildings erected between 1773 and 1776 to the designs of Henry Keene. They form a continuation of the northern range begun in 1753

under the will of Dr George Clarke, a benefactor who, with the aid of Nicholas Hawksmoor and William Townesend, had already built the present hall and library before his death in 1736. He left a design for rebuilding the whole college according to a uniform pattern which was engraved by Williams in his *Oxonia Depicta*. But the south range was never built, and Keene's treatment of the northern range did not conform exactly to Clarke's rather dull design. It terminates in the Provost's Lodging which, seen from the gardens, gives the illusion of a country house standing in its own park.

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making the colour plates.*



1. *The Divinity School*



2. *The Radcliffe Library*



3 *The Radcliffe Observatory*



4. *The Clarendon Building*



5. *All Souls College*



6. Christ Church Hall



7. *Exeter College Hall*



8. *Jesus College Chapel*



9. *Lincoln College Chapel*



10. *Magdalen College Chapel*



11. New College Chapel



12. Oriel College



13. *The Canterbury Quadrangle, St John's College*



14. *Trinity College*



15. University College Hall



16. Wadham College Chapel

A SELECTED LIST OF
KING PENGUINS

ACKERMANN'S CAMBRIDGE

R. Ross Williamson

MEDIEVAL CARVINGS
IN EXETER CATHEDRAL

C. J. P. Cave

THE LEAVES OF SOUTHWELL

N. Pevsner and F. Attenborough

ELIZABETHAN MINIATURES

Carl Winter

THE MICROCOSM OF LONDON

John Summerson

A BOOK OF GREEK COINS

Charles Seltman

RUSSIAN ICONS

David Talbot Rice

SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES

N. Wooster and Arthur Smith

HERALDRY IN ENGLAND

Anthony Wagner

WOODCUTS
OF ALBRECHT DÜRER

T. D. Barlow

EARLY BRITISH RAILWAYS

Christian Barman

LIFE IN AN
ENGLISH VILLAGE

N. Carrington and E. Bawden

JOHN GILPIN

Illustrated by Ronald Searle

